

Course Outline

Course Code	: MKT3702A
Course Title	: Consumer Behavior
Semester	: Semester 2, AY 2025/2026
Faculty	: Associate Professor Doreen Kum
Department	: Marketing
Email	: bizdk@nus.edu.sg
URL	: https://discovery.nus.edu.sg/3812-doreen-kum

Overview

“Our jobs as marketers are to understand how the customer wants to buy and help them do so.” – Bryan Eisenberg

Understanding customers is a cornerstone in marketing that have contributed to the success of many brands today. This course aims to teach students the principles and process of consumer decision making. For example, topics include how consumers learn and evaluate, how they decide, and also what they are influenced by. Students will also learn consumer research skills so that they are able to gather, analyse, interpret consumer insights.

Course Objectives

This course builds on the basic understanding acquired in a foundation marketing module. Learning outcomes include:

1. Conceptual Understanding:

- **Define** core concepts and theories in consumer behavior and **explain** its strategic importance to marketing management and business decision-making.
- **Describe and differentiate** the stages of the consumer decision-making process for various product categories, consumer types, and buying situations.

2. Analyzing Influences:

- **Analyze** the impact of **psychological factors** (e.g., motivation, perception, learning, attitudes, personality, lifestyle) on individual consumer choices and preferences.
- **Examine** how **social and cultural influences** (e.g., culture, subculture, social class, reference groups, family, opinion leadership) shape consumer behavior and consumption patterns.
- **Identify and evaluate** the role of **situational factors** (e.g., purchase environment, time pressure, mood) in influencing consumer decisions and consumption experiences.

3. Critical Thinking:

- **Critique** various marketing practices from a consumer behavior perspective.
- **Develop** actionable consumer insights from case studies and real-world scenarios and **propose** relevant research questions to further investigate consumer motivations and actions.

4. Understanding Oneself as a Consumer

- Students can also look forward to understanding their decision making better.

A blended learning approach is used for this course where pre-shared videos and readings optimize learning by allowing students to grasp foundational concepts at their own pace before class. This approach reserves valuable in-person time for higher-level learning activities such as applications, discussions, and case studies, fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking. Such an approach is suitable for motivated students who

are willing to 1) read widely, 2) prepare for class through keeping up with assigned readings and video content, and 3) invest time for group work. This course is not suitable for students who dislike group work.

Online learning should take approximately 1 hour. In-class sessions are 2 hours per week (but could be longer during project presentation weeks). On weeks of assigned case studies, students are expected to prepare the case analysis adequately before coming to class even if you are not in the presenting group. Each case requires approximately 3 hours (varies among individuals) of preparation time.

Assessment

Assessment Components	Weightage
1. Class Participation	20%
2. Individual Assignments	30%
3. In-class Quiz	10%
4. Case Study (Group)	15%
5. Project (Group) (Group work components are subject to peer evaluation)	25%

- **Class Participation**

You are expected to attend each class **on time** and participate **voluntarily** in class discussions. You are also expected to come prepared with case analyses to contribute to the discussions by actively listening to your classmates and volunteering your own viewpoints. Attendance does not constitute class participation and would not be awarded any marks.

- **Individual Assignments**

This item is graded by **punctual completion (before each weekly lesson)** of the assigned videos, e-book readings, concept check quizzes integrated in the videos, and assignments in the e-book.

- **In-class Quiz**

There will be a multiple-choice closed-book quiz held in class on **Week 10**. Only students absent on medical grounds will be allowed to take a replacement quiz.

- **Case Study**

Each group will be assigned to critically analyze a case study. The presentation time is 20 minutes, followed by 20 minutes of Q&A from the class.

- **Project**

The purpose of this project is for you to apply the concepts learned in this course to a topic of your choice. More information will be shared in class during the project briefing.

- **Peer Evaluation**

Members of each group will evaluate the contribution of other group members. An average score will be calculated for each group member. **Your score for the group assessments will be weighted by this average peer evaluation score.** As such, poor contribution to group work will affect your grade adversely. For example, if your average peer evaluation score is 50%, and your group scores 90% for both the case study and project, your personal scores for those components are 45%.

The peer evaluation form can be downloaded from the course Canvas site. Your evaluations will be treated confidentially. Non-submissions would be assumed as 100% ratings for all group members.

General Guide & Reading (e.g. Case preparation guide, project report guide, main textbook & supplementary materials, etc)

1. Solomon, Michael R. and Cristel Antonia Russell (2024), *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 14th Edition, Pearson (ebook)
2. Schiffman, Leon G. and Joseph L. Wisenblit (2018), *Consumer Behavior*, 12th Edition, Pearson

Additional readings will be assigned during the semester.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

- <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/administrative-policies-procedures/acceptance-record#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>
- <http://nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>

Schedule and Outline

Week	Session	Chapters(s)¹
1	Understanding Consumer Behavior How to Motivate Consumers Project Briefing	1, 5
2	Learning the Case Method How Consumers Set Goals and Make Decisions High versus Low Involvement Decisions	5, 7, 8 (pp 242, 250)
3	Consumer Personality, Values, and Psychographics How to Understand Consumers through Research: Gathering Consumer Insights	10 Appendices C and D
4	How to Catch Consumers' Attention Case 1	3
5	How to Teach Consumers Case 2	4
6	Chinese New Year – no class	
Recess Week		
7	How Consumers Form Attitudes Case 3	6
8	Project Consultation (by appointment)	
9	How to Persuade Consumers Case 4	6
10	Social and Family Influence Case 5 In-class Quiz	11, 12
11	Cultural Influences and Symbolic Consumption Case 6 Case 7 Submission of projects via Canvas on 5 Apr 11.59PM	9, 14
12	Group Project Presentation I	
13	Group Project Presentation II	

¹ Chapters are mapped to Solomon and Russell. You may refer to corresponding chapters in Schiffman and Wisenblit (2018) if you prefer to.